



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF



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6 FEBRUARY 1966

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1. North Vietnam

Hanoi today sent its MIG-21s into action for the first time. Two of the high-performance fighters were scrambled from Phuc Yen against a U-2 reconnaissance flight over northwestern North Vietnam.

One of the fighters tried to intercept the U-2 when it was more than 50 miles inside Laos on its return flight. Despite this aggressive behavior, neither MIG was able to bring the U-2 down.

There is other evidence that Hanoi is broadening the scope of its MIG fighter operations. Late last week, several flights took off at night to challenge US air strikes. These were the first such attempts by the Vietnamese Air Force, indicating a growing confidence in Hanoi in both its pilots and its all-weather aircraft.

2. Vietnam

Moscow, Peking, Hanoi, and the Viet Cong have all blasted the Honolulu gathering. Predictably, they look upon it as a strategy conference to work out tactics for escalating the Vietnam war.

Moscow terms the meeting "dangerous and ominous" in that it "could lead to an extension of the conflict in Southeast Asia, the consequences of which are hard to imagine."

3. Belgium

The crisis continues following the King's refusal to accept the government's resignation. There was one hopeful development today, however. The doctors decided to suspend their strike. This may well be a result of the King's own intervention. He has been taking an unusually direct part in the current crisis, a reflection of the gravity with which he views it.

4. Dominican Republic

There has been some progress in the past several days in moving Defense Minister Rivera Caminero toward a voluntary departure. Garcia Godoy, however, is balking over some of the conditions Rivera Caminero has set. Fearing leftist reaction, the president is reluctant to guarantee that the army and air force chiefs remain and that there be no further changes in the high command for the duration of his regime.

5. Cuba

Relations between Havana and Peking, on the decline for more than a year, have now taken another sharp turn for the worse. Fidel Castro today publicly accused Peking of trying to subvert the Cuban armed forces with "a massive distribution of propaganda."

Regarding the Chinese cutback on its trade of rice for Cuban sugar this year, Castro charged China with joining the "Yankee imperialist blockade." China, he said, was engaged in "blackmail, extortion, pressure, aggression, and strangulation of smaller countries" like Cuba.

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6. Ecuador

Military leaders have been unable to agree on whether to replace the present junta with a single executive. This division is itself a bad sign. The majority [redacted]

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[redacted] favor the assumption of full power by a single military man, cancellation of the 5 June elections, and strong measures to halt student disorders.

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7. Italy

Early national elections may be necessary. Aldo Moro gave up his effort to form a new government late yesterday. Though there is apparently to be another attempt to reconstitute the center-left coalition under some other Christian Democrat, divisions within that party will make it difficult. President Saragat plans other delaying tactics in the hope that elections can be avoided, but the prospects seem dim.

8. Libya

Aging King Idris is seriously considering an early move to abolish the monarchy and establish a republic. He seems motivated largely by a determination to prevent the succession of the crown prince, whom he thoroughly distrusts. The King apparently plans to entrust transitional arrangements to former prime minister Halim, the man who was largely responsible for Libyan approval of the Wheelus Base agreement.

Libya has been politically stable under the conservative King's rule, but restive reformist elements in the army and civil bureaucracy have been waiting on the sidelines for his passing.

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